



Deadline Approaching for Organic Cost Share Applications

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MADISON – The deadline is approaching to apply for the organic cost share program through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Farms and companies that sell, process, or package organic agricultural products need to have applications postmarked by October 31, 2011.

This program provides cost share assistance to producers or handlers of organic agricultural products who are currently certified by a USDA/NOP Accredited Certifying Agent. All certified organic farmers and companies are eligible for reimbursement annually.

The organic cost share program provides for a 75% cost share of certification costs with a maximum payment of \$750 per farm or company. If the farm or company is certified in more than one certification category; such as crops, livestock, and handler; they are eligible for reimbursement up to \$750 in each category.

Reimbursements are made on a first-come, first-serve basis until the deadline or funds are exhausted. Any certification related expenses including inspection fees, user fees, and certifier-required testing paid from October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011 can be reimbursed through this application.

Wisconsin ranks second in the nation in the number of organic farms with over 1,200 certified organic farms and over 200 companies certified to process organic products. Nearly half of the certified organic farms have participated in the cost share program in past years.

Application materials were mailed to all certified organic farmers and processors in July. Materials are also available online at datcp.wi.gov/Farms/Organic_Farming/Cost_Share_Program/. For questions or more information, contact Laura Paine, DATCP's Organic Agriculture Specialist, at 608-224-5120 or laura.paine@wi.gov.

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